

Security Angles Probed In Story on Super Bomb

House Member Hits Arms Agency
Official for Letter on Weapon

By EARL H. VOSS /

Star Staff Writer

The Atomic Energy Commission is investigating whether security regulations have been violated in the disclosure yesterday that the United States has developed a nuclear weapon with "enhanced radiation" which may approach the potency of the so-called neutron bomb.

Adrian Fisher, deputy director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, mentioned the "enhanced radiation" weapon in a March 14 letter to Senator Dodd, Democrat of Connecticut. The letter was released by the Senator Tuesday.

Republican Representative Jack Westland, of Washington, an influential member of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, says he "hit the ceiling" when he saw The Star's report on what he said had been a "top secret" weapon. He will demand Mr. Fisher's resignation. Mr. Westland said, if the Atomic Energy Commission confirms his belief that security regulations have been violated.

Foster Comments

The Star article, written by reporter Earl H. Voss, was based on Mr. Fisher's letter and on Senator Dodd's reply.

William C. Foster, director of the disarmament agency, informed Representative Westland by letter yesterday that

the lead paragraph on the article was not "in any way justified by Mr. Fisher's letter."

"Mr. Voss," the director said, "obviously had this information from another source and used the letter from Mr. Fisher to Senator Dodd as a 'handle' for publishing it."

Question of Clearance

Mr. Foster said his deputy's language in referring to the "enhanced radiation" weapon had been "made available for clearance to representatives of the Department of Defense, the AEC and CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) concerned with this area, and no objection was made to its publication."

The critical point, according to competent sources, is whether the Fisher letter was submitted for clearance of classification, that is, for permission to mention

See WEAPON, Page A-12

WEAPON

Continued From Page A-1
tion publicly the reportedly "top secret" weapon.

The Fisher letter, it was reported, had been submitted to Leland J. Hayworth, atomic energy commissioner; Paul H. Nitze, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, and McGeorge Bundy, special assistant to the President for national security affairs, among others.

No objections were raised, according to informed sources.

The chairman of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, Senator Pastore, Democrat of Rhode Island, is said to be "very concerned" about the case. The committee expects a report from security authorities in the Atomic Energy Commission, possibly today.

AEC Has No Comment

The Atomic Energy Commission had no comment on the report its security section is investigating the case.

Representative Westland said he will ask the Attorney General's office to consider prosecution of violators if the AEC establishes that security has been compromised or if any laws have been violated.

Mr. Fisher's reference to the "enhanced radiation" weapon occurred in an exchange of letters with Senator Dodd about the United States' proposal for a nuclear test ban treaty. The disarmament official mentioned the weapon to support his claim that the United States has no critical need for the pure fusion or so-called neutron bomb and therefore could enter into a test ban treaty with the Soviet Union.

In his reply, Senator Dodd said he had hesitated to refer to the "enhanced radiation" weapon because of its classification, but still saw value in developing a pure-fusion weapon because it would be cheaper, lighter, more versatile and effective, and could be "tailored in far lower discriminating yields" of tens of tons TNT equivalent, instead of thousands of tons.

Minimum Blast Effect

The neutron bomb, generally understood to be a pure fusion weapon, would have a minimum blast and heat effect but would emit large numbers of deadly neutrons that could kill people while preserving structures.

So far scientists are not known to have developed a pure fusion weapon.

"Enhanced radiation" refers to a burst of neutrons lasting for only millionths of a second and is not to be confused with radioactivity from nuclear-bomb fallout, which is a lingering phenomenon.

Representative Westland said he was "astounded" that Mr. Fisher would "put out in print" information on the enhanced-radiation weapon. The Congressman said he had been very critical of Mr. Fisher in his telephone conversation with Mr. Foster Tuesday.

The weapon is "not a subject for discussion by the deputy administrator of the disarmament agency," Mr. Westland said. "This information should come if it comes at all from the Department of Defense or the Atomic Energy Commission or the Joint Committee."